AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23 wherein:

said portable terminal includes speech recognition means for performing speech recognition on said input speech information.

3. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23 wherein:

said server includes speech recognition means for performing speech recognition on said input speech information received from said portable terminal over the network.

4-5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 2 wherein:

said speech recognition means includes means for verifying whether or not the speech recognition on said input speech information has been made correctly, such that

if the speech recognition is verified by said verification means to be made correctly, then said input speech information, processed with said speech recognition means, is output, and

if the speech recognition is verified by said verification means not to be made correctly, then speech recognition is performed again to output the input speech information processed with said speech recognition means.

7. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 3 wherein:

said speech recognition means includes means for verifying whether or not the speech recognition on said input speech information has been made correctly, such that

if the speech recognition is verified by said verification means to be made correctly, then said input speech information, processed with said speech recognition means, is output, and

if the speech recognition is verified by said verification means not to be made correctly, then speech recognition is performed again on the input speech information received over the network from said portable terminal to output the input speech information processed with said speech recognition means.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The client for a contents selection system according to claim 25, further comprising:

speech recognition means for performing speech recognition on the input speech information, and transmitting the recognized input speech information to the server.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) The server for a contents selection system according to claim 26, further comprising:

speech recognition means for performing speech recognition on said input speech information received from said portable terminal over said network.

12-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) A contents selection system for selecting content items, each content item corresponding to a first preparation information within a first category, a second preparation information within a second category, and a third preparation information within a third category, the system comprising:

a portable terminal configured to transmit input speech information to a server over a network; and

a server configured to receive the transmitted input speech information from the portable terminal, and to generate a contents list,

wherein the server generates a first contents list by calculating the similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between first input speech information and the first preparation information for the content items;

wherein the server selects the second category or the third category based upon which category will better narrow the first contents list by comparing acoustical variations between preparation information within the second category with acoustical variations between preparation information within the third category, and selecting the category with greater acoustical variations;

wherein the server transmits input request information related to the selected second or the third category to the portable terminal; and

wherein the server narrows the first content list by calculating the similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between second input speech information and the second preparation information or the third preparation information for the content items.

24. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23, wherein the categories include title, performer, and genre.

25. (Currently Amended) A portable terminal for a contents selection system, the portable terminal comprising:

a transmitter to transmit input speech information to a server over a network; and

a receiver to receive a contents list corresponding to content items, the contents list generated by the server;

wherein each content item corresponds to a first preparation information within a first category, a second preparation information within a second category, and a third preparation information within a third category; and

wherein a first contents list is generated by calculating the similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between the input speech information and the first preparation information for the content items;

wherein the second category or the third category is selected based upon which category will better narrow the first contents list by comparing acoustical variations between preparation information within the second category with acoustical variations between preparation information within the third category, and selecting the category with greater acoustical variations;

wherein the receiver receives input request information related to the selected second or third category; and

wherein the receiver receives a second contents list narrower than the first contents list and calculated by determining the similarity of acoustic characteristic

quantities between second input speech information and the second preparation information or the third preparation information for the content items.

26. (Currently Amended) A server for a contents selection system, the server comprising:

a receiver to receive input speech information from a portable terminal over a network; and

a transmitter to transmit a contents list corresponding to content items, the contents list generated by the server;

wherein each content item corresponds to a first preparation information within a first category, a second preparation information within a second category, and a third preparation information within a third category;

wherein the server generates a first contents list by calculating the similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between first input speech information and the first preparation information for the content items;

wherein the server selects the second category or the third category based upon which category will better narrow the first contents list by comparing acoustical variations between preparation information within the second category with acoustical variations between preparation information within the third category, and selecting the category with greater acoustical variations;

wherein the server transmits input request information related to the second or third category to the portable terminal; and

wherein the server narrows the first content list by calculating similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between second input speech information and the second preparation information or third preparation information for the content items.

27. (Currently Amended) A contents selection method, comprising:

transmitting input speech information from a portable terminal to a server over a network; and

generating a contents list corresponding to contents items, the contents list generated at the server;

wherein each content item corresponds to a first preparation information within a first category, a second preparation information within a second category, and a third preparation information within a third category;

wherein the server generates a first contents list by calculating the similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between first input speech information and the first preparation information for the content items;

wherein the server selects the second category or the third category based upon which category will better narrow the first contents list by comparing acoustical variations between preparation information within the second category with acoustical variations between preparation information within the third category, and selecting the category with greater acoustical variations;

wherein the server transmits input request information related to the selected second or third category to the portable terminal; and

wherein the server narrows the first content list by calculating similarity of acoustic characteristic quantities between second input speech information and the second preparation information or third preparation information for the content items.

28. (Previously Presented) The contents selection method according to claim 27, wherein the categories include title, performer, and genre.

29. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23, wherein said server sends the contents list to said portable terminal if the contents list is determined using threshold value.

30. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23, wherein said server requests the input speech information associated with a specified category.

31. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 30, wherein the first input speech information requested by said server to a user is title information.

32. (Previously Presented) The server for a contents selection system according to claim 26, wherein said server sends the contents list to said portable terminal if the contents list is determined using threshold value.

33. (Previously Presented) The server for a contents selection system according to claim 26, wherein said server requests the input speech information associated with a specified category.

34. (Previously Presented) The server for a contents selection system according to claim 33, wherein the first input speech information requested by said server to a user is title information.

35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) The contents selection system according to claim 23, further comprising an optimum output state checking unit, for determining whether information pertinent to contents items in the first contents list is preferably output at the portable terminal as text, a still image, a moving picture, or speech.